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## THE BANTU SPEECH OF SOUTHERNMOST AFRICA.

*A Grammar of the Kafir Language.* By J. McLaren, M.A. Pp. xiv+240. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1906.) Price 5s.

A FAIR-MINDED critic would start a review of this work by a general verdict of praise for its compactness and usefulness. It is an excellent grammar of the Kosa<sup>1</sup> language of that southernmost group of Bantu-speaking negroes known unfortunately by the most inappropriate term, the Arab word Kafir, or "Unbeliever." The group of Bantu peoples who inhabit the coastlands of the southern extremity of Africa, between the Transkei River in Cape Colony and Inhambane in the Portuguese Province of Moçambique, had better be styled generically "Zulu" rather than "Kafir" or "Kafir-Zulu."

The name Kafir (which, if it is still to be used, had better be spelt as in Arabic with the single "f") is derived from the Dutch Caffer and the Portuguese Cafre, and these again from the language of the Swahili Arabs whom the Portuguese encountered as the masters and traders of South-eastern Africa in the beginning of the sixteenth century. These Arabs, who radiated from Zanzibar northwards and southwards, called all the negroes south of the Zambezi delta "Kafir" in the singular and "Kufar" in the plural, and by this name they spoke of them to the Portuguese, who at first made use of the Zanzibar Arabs as pilots and guides along the eastern coast of Africa. The Cape Dutch borrowed the term from the Portuguese, and so passed it on to the English.

The great Zulu race at the present day is divided into three main branches so far as language or dialect is concerned—the *Ronga* or *Tonga* section of South-east Africa (including the Abagaza), between Amatongaland and Sofala; the *Zulus* of Zululand, with their outlying colonies and offshoots in Swaziland, Matabeleland, and across the Zambezi (through British Central Africa to German East Africa); and the *Kosa* Kafirs of Western Natal, Pondoland, and the Transkei territories of Cape Colony. The difference between the Zulu and Kosa dialects is much less than between Zulu and Shi-ronga. Naturally, the Zulu speech that has been dropped down here and there in little colonies in East-Central Africa north of the Zambezi is already departing widely from the Zulu in Zululand, owing to intermarriage with local races.

The original place of origin in Central Africa of the Zulu-Kafir peoples and dialects is still an unsolved mystery; their nearest relations at the present day in vocabulary and grammar (though not in phonology) are the great Basuto group of Central South Africa and the Damara (Ova-herero) of South-west Africa. There is not that marked relationship with the existing tongues in Central Zambezia which one would expect to find, though, of course, as these are equally "Bantu" in form and construction they offer a good

<sup>1</sup> It is more convenient to write this word, which begins with a lateral click [=//osa], with a K. It is usually spelt Xosa in South Africa.

deal of resemblance to Zulu, but not more so than is shown by the other Bantu languages of East Africa. Here and there in the dialects of Lake Nyasa and even of the tongues of inner East Africa there are hints of resemblances to the Zulu group in vocabulary. At the same time, many of the peculiar features in vocabulary and grammar of the Zulu language and its kindred dialects are only to be met with elsewhere in the Se-suto forms of speech, and perhaps in the Ochi-herero. The Zulu-Kafir language group offers some archaic features in the form of its prefixes and of certain word-roots. But it is *not* the "Sanskrit of the Bantu," nor nearly so archaic as the languages round Tanganyika and the Victoria Nyanza.

One of the most marked peculiarities of Zulu and Kosa Kafir is the possession of three "clicks." The Shi-ronga dialects of South-east Africa, though closely related to Zulu in vocabulary and grammatical structure, do not possess these clicks, and no trace of them is met with in Se-suto or Ochi-herero, or indeed in any other Bantu language. The general assumption is that the clicks have been borrowed from the Hottentots, and, of course, in the case of the Kosa Kafirs this is conceivable, as for centuries they have bordered on the Hottentot domain. Yet it is rather extraordinary that the Basuto peoples, who in history certainly preceded the Kafir-Zulu in the invasion of South Africa, and who, as may be seen by their physical appearance, have anciently inter-bred with the Hottentots, should not have borrowed any click from Hottentot or Bushman. Likewise the Ova-herero and their allies have been in close contact with Hottentot peoples in South-west Africa without catching the infection of the click. Miss A. Werner, one of the few serious students in Great Britain of Bantu languages, has written several articles on this subject, without, however, arriving at a definite conclusion as to whether the Zulu-Kafir clicks are borrowed from Hottentots or are independent developments of the language, recently acquired *in situ*. The author of the work under review seems to suggest that the three Zulu-Kafir clicks may be explosive pronunciations of the gutturals. If so, they might have developed separately without Hottentot influence.

It is a pity in the work before us that the author has not had the courage to quit South African provincialism and aim at bringing his grammar into accord with the approved classification of the Bantu languages, and a system of spelling, such as that of Lepsius, which is both scientific and logical. A strong man should come forward, and, by his influence, compel all philologists, the whole world over, to adopt the Lepsius alphabet (with two or three trifling changes) as the standard which all persons must adopt in transcribing the languages of the world not already and anciently expressed in Roman letters; nay, more, it is to be hoped one day that all the civilised tongues of the world—English, French, German, Russian, Greek, Arabic, and every other speech with a literature—may be written down in one form of lettering, and according to one standard—perhaps the Lepsius—of expressing sounds by letters.

Meantime, some uniformity of transliteration might

well be enforced in Africa. As it is, there is one method adopted in the Western Congo, another in South Africa, a third in East Africa, and a fourth in West Africa and the Sudan. Mr. McLaren, in the Kafir grammar under review, adopts the South African standard; the three clicks which Lepsius expresses by /, /, and // are rendered (as they have been for half a century) by *c*, *q*, and *x*.

Now throughout Eastern Africa, *c* or *ch* is used to express the palatal consonantal combination of *tʃ* which in South Africa and many West African missionary grammars is rendered by *tsh*; *q* is universally used in North, North Central, and Western Africa (besides by Lepsius) to transliterate the Arabic ق—*qof*, a very explosive *k*, the old meaning of the Mediterranean *q*. *X* is used by the Congo missionaries (following the Portuguese) as an equivalent for the English *sh* (*ʃ*), and by others as a convenient form of the Greek χ to express the strong guttural *kh* (Scotch and German *ch*). On the other hand, *kh*, *sh*, and *zh* in transliterations into Roman letters of Hindustani and Arabic names are intended to be pronounced literally like an aspirated *k*, *s*, and *z*. It is therefore necessary for a logical orthography to adopt *c*, *q*, and *x* for the purposes above mentioned, namely, to represent the English *ch*, the Arabic ق and the Greek χ. Therefore it would be preferable to render the South African clicks by other signs, such as those proposed by Lepsius.

For the practical purposes of those who wish to acquire the Kafir language or arrive quickly at an understanding of its main features, Mr. McLaren's grammar may be very highly commended.

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#### MINING LAW.

*Mining Law of the British Empire.* By Charles J. Alford. Pp. xii+300. (London: Charles Griffin and Co., Ltd., 1906.) Price 8s. 6d. net.

ALTHOUGH admirable treatises on mining law for the guidance of lawyers have been written by Rogers, Walmsley, McSwinnery, Bainbridge, Cockburn, and numerous foreign authors, the field has by no means been exhausted; and Mr. Alford's work forms a welcome addition to technical literature. Written with conspicuous literary skill by a mining engineer of wide experience, it gives a concise summary of the various codes of mining law of the British possessions throughout the world, with well considered remarks on their characteristics. The term mining law is taken by the author to mean the enactments that regulate the acquisition and tenure of mining rights. Mining regulations, which control the methods of working mines, receive merely incidental mention. In the case of Great Britain, it is true, the Mines Regulation Acts are quoted at some length as models; but even in this case no reference is made to the Amendment Act of 1903 or to the numerous special statutes, of which fourteen are cited in Sir C. Le Neve Foster's "Ore and Stone Mining," that affect miners and workers in open pits in this country. Indeed, Mr. Alford's chapter on the

mining law of Great Britain is the least striking in the book. Mining in Great Britain is so largely a matter of contract between lord and lessee, and so largely concerned with non-metallic minerals, that there is little scope for the comparative treatment of the metal-mining rights and obligations that forms so interesting a feature of the chapters dealing with colonial laws.

The historical study of the inception of mining law receives, as is to be expected in a book of a purely practical character, only brief mention, and the author has refrained from the temptation of citing the ancient statutes set forth in that delightful old work on mining law, the "Fodinæ Regales" of Sir John Pettus, Knight (1670). Originally, the author tells us, the minerals of the country were worked by slaves or serfs for the benefit of the lords of the soil; and Mr. Alford would have added to the interest of his note on the free miners had he mentioned the fact that the last native-born Briton who was a slave in Great Britain died in the reign of Queen Victoria. When the Queen ascended the throne, many men and women were still living who had in their youth borne a legal bondage in the collieries of Scotland. Such miners received wages, but were not allowed to move away from their master's estate. They were bought and sold with the property; and although they were freed from their servitude by an Act passed in 1799, the slave taint stuck to their occupation for many years.

Mr. Alford divides his work into nineteen chapters, dealing respectively with the principles of mining law, and with the mining laws of Great Britain, British India, Ceylon, Burma, the Malay Peninsula, British North Borneo, Egypt (should not a word of explanation have been given that Egypt is not a part of the British Empire?), Cyprus, the Dominion of Canada, British Guiana, the Gold Coast, Cape Colony, Natal, the Orange River Colony, the Transvaal Colony, Rhodesia, the Commonwealth of Australia, and New Zealand. An analysis of the mining laws cited shows a grouping of the principles of their construction into two classes:—(1) that in which the State or a private owner of mining property has the right to grant concessions or leases; and (2) that in which any individual, under specified restrictions, has the right to locate a certain limited area of ground or claim and to work or to dispose of it. It is surprising to learn that five-sixths of all the mining areas of the world are worked under the former system of titles. The concession system of large prospecting areas, followed by mining leases of limited areas, of which the present mining law of Egypt is an example, appears to be the most advantageous system of opening up an unexplored country.

As an authoritative statement of the conditions of tenure of mining property under various laws, Mr. Alford's book cannot fail to prove of great value to all connected with mining in the colonies. The work is most carefully and accurately done. There are, however, a few slight omissions; and in order to make the survey of the mining law of the British Empire complete, the author might with advantage